

PHI234 / POL312 - 3 credits - writ int PHILOSOPHY OF LAW / JURISPRUDENCE

time Tu 2:00-4:40

instructor Marcello Di Bello

venue Carman 349

e-mail marcello.dibello@lehman.cuny.edu

office hrs Th 2-3, Carman 365



the Twelve Tables



section of Hammurabi's code

Course topics¹

part 1 - law and interpretation - What makes a written text a piece of law? What principles inform the writing of laws? Are laws mere human conventions? How should judges decide difficult cases?

part 2 - law and morality - Are laws grounded on moral and ethical principles? Should we obey immoral laws? Why should we obey the law in the first place?

part 3 - algorithms and the justice system - How are algorithms used in the justice system today? Do they pose a threat? Can they improve the justice system?

¹ Official course description from the undergraduate bulletin: "Philosophical study of legal concepts and legal reasoning. Topics to be examined include the logic structure of law, the problems of natural law and justice, and the grounds of laws"

What will I learn?

You will develop analytical reading and writing skills. You will also think through some fundamental questions, both old and contemporary, in the philosophy of law.

Does this course have a website?

Yes, it does. Videos, slides and other course materials are available at

www.phi234.marcellodibello.com

The schedule with topics to be covered each week is posted on the website. You should check the website regularly, at least once a week. *Blackboard will not be used.*

Is there a textbook?

There is no textbook for this course. The website contains links to videos, slides and others materials. Course materials include scholarly articles and essays, court opinions, a play, a philosophical dialogue, movie clips and slides.

How will I be graded?

There are two types of assignments for this course:

(a) four *graded* assignments – each worth 25%

(b) four *pass/fail* assignments - you must receive a passing grade on each

For due dates and grading criteria, check the course website.

Is there a late submission policy

Yes, there is. Check the course website for the late submission policy.

Are there tutoring services for this course?

The *Academic Center for Excellence* provides tutoring in the humanities, social sciences, and writing. Please visit their website at www.lehman.edu/issp or call 718-960-8175.

I have a disability. Can you help me?

Students with disabilities who may need classroom accommodations are encouraged to register with the Office of Student Disability Services. For more information, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services, Shuster Hall, Room 238, at 718-960-8441.